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ABSTRACT

Prepared under authority of the Economic Opportunity Act, this New Careers report offers suggestions on how police departments can improve relations with inner city disadvantaged residents (usually minority groups) by using hard core unemployed community members to close the information gap on both sides, provide community services, relieve the police manpower shortage, and provide career employment. Conventional police aide recruitment methods are judged and found lacking, mainly for failure to attract persons--notably those with police records--who are most likely to have acceptance and influence among the hard core. Steps in training and job development are outlined, followed by a successful police community relations aide program in the Los Angeles Police Department. (LY)

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NEW CAREERS POLICE-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

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I. Introduction

Law in today's society, what it is and how it should function, is being seriously questioned by many groups. The police image is at an all-time low among all groups (but particularly the disadvantaged) and a dangerous polarization of attitudes is taking place on an increasingly irrational level. It has become commonplace for both sides to over-react and discussion appears impossible without a "we win, they lose" ego involvement. Without assigning blame to either side, the fact is that the mistrust in which the police and public hold each other is based largely on faulty and incomplete information (if not sheer ignorance of the other). While misunderstanding and hostilities will undoubtedly continue to occur on both sides, a reasonable goal would seem to be to create a climate wherein rational discussion can take place without threatening either side.

For the police department to function more effectively and more humanely in the communities, a direct link is essential -- someone who is accepted as one of the hard-core and who will try to overcome his own inner misgivings in order to educate his neighbors to the functions and usefulness of the police department, someone who can "cool" tense situations by explaining, interpreting, mediating between the two "sides",

who can, by his personal experience and influence, most certainly help prevent crime and drug abuse. Past "failures" and "liabilities" become a unique asset and contribution to the community at large and to the police department.

We present herein no answer nor even a comprehensive method of arriving at an answer. What we do present is a method of bridging the vast expanse between the two sides: the police department and the disadvantaged (usually minority) groups. Since much of the conflict between these two groups is based on misunderstandings and lack of information about the other, we propose that police departments recruit, train, and utilize members of these communities (disadvantaged, hard-core unemployed, and minority) to close the information gap as well as provide services to the community, relieve the police manpower shortage, and provide career employment for unemployed.

II. Background of the Problem

Public safety agencies face a dilemma which is increasing, not diminishing, with time. Lack of manpower to function effectively exists side by side with large numbers of unemployed who, ironically and significantly, are indigenous to the minority communities where police especially need to overcome suspicion and hostility, improve their public image and provide better services.

Police departments throughout the country today are facing serious shortages of personnel. According to the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, approximately two-thirds of the police departments in medium-sized cities are below authorized personnel size. The Commission calculates that to bring police departments up to 1967 authorized strength will take 50,000 new policemen. This is a minimal figure since the volume of offenses will undoubtedly grow faster than the population as cities become more crowded and urban problems multiply. In dealing with the problem of recruiting police department staff, it is becoming increasingly clear that conventional recruitment techniques and requirements are not satisfactorily meeting the need.

Within the police department, attention is focused on law enforcement, arrests for serious crime and disturbances because (a) the need is most pressing and inescapable, and (b) most police officers join the department and are trained for "real police work," i.e., apprehending criminals.

Crime prevention and "community relations" are a lesser priority due, not only to understaffing, but to a lack of know-how and empathy by the police department. There is also a lack of acceptance -- even a resistance -- by hard-core minority communities to well-meaning attempts to establish communications.

In particular, it is in areas characterized by poverty, high rates of unemployment, racial segregation, social and family disorganization that the greatest amount of crime occurs. While any attempt to analyze the basis of crime must take into account complicated sets of circumstances, the President's Commission repeatedly underscores the connection between poverty, social injustice, frustration of opportunity and the incentive toward criminality, particularly as these pressures are exerted upon the young. The eruption of violence in the ghetto areas has made it clear that the sta-

bility and welfare of a city as a whole is deeply affected by what goes on in its poorest areas.

III. Recruiting and Community Relations Efforts

Increased centralization in many cities has the effect of decreasing the amount of contact between the police force as an agency and the community. While the patrolman is still visible, the agency he represents is relatively inaccessible to the ghetto resident, who is usually less able to maneuver the administrative system on his own behalf than his more middle-class counterpart. As a result, people from low-income areas rarely think of the police force as an agency of assistance. These factors isolate the police department from the inner life of poor communities which, in turn, cuts off the agency from the kind of information related to the causes of unrest which might help prevent trouble.

In an effort to establish and/or maintain communications with the community, urban police officers do maintain various public relations programs. Police officers are attending meetings of community organizations, visiting schools and in general providing information about the police department. The department, in turn, depends on these officers for information about the problems and attitudes of different segments of the community. The objective is "an atmosphere which encourages a partnership between the

community and the police in establishing and maintaining the 'public order'".

The Justice Department, through the Office of Law Enforcement Assistance, funded a few special community relations programs during 1966. They consisted mainly of an effort to bring the police officer and members of the community together in "group type" meetings on a regular basis. While these programs and others like them may have contributed to increased mutual understanding between the participants, their success was limited because they relied on a relatively brief period of contact to overcome a lifetime of misperception and distrust and, more fundamentally, the programs tended to become primarily a public relations technique rather than a mechanism for possible change and adjustment in dealing with basic problems. The failure to provide any means for utilizing the information gained or the energy mobilized for mutual benefits may actually result in more frustration to the community as it realizes that the police department cannot take positive action.

Although these neighborhoods are populated primarily by members of various minority groups, most police departments employ relatively few Negroes and other minority groups. Certainly, minority group employment is nowhere near a percentage that would represent the community as a whole, and few of those employed in police departments are in positions of major responsibility. As a result, very few of those police department members detailed to predominantly minority neighborhoods will have been recruited from within those neighborhoods.

Several cities have made special efforts to recruit Negro, Puerto Rican, and Mexican-American policemen in order to reduce hostility and suspicion in ghetto communities. They have had little success because (a) minorities do not apply in great numbers due to their own and their reference group's mistrust of police; (b) few are able to qualify for the civil service position of policeman as currently specified; and (c) those able to pass the written and physical exams oftentimes are systematically screened out on the basis of a subjective oral interview oriented toward the middle-class applicant.

A few police departments have undertaken to train minorities to pass the standard exam for policeman. Enrollees, almost without exception, are the cream of the crop. Their training program (on-the-job and remediation) may last up to three years in some cases and the exam may be retaken until it is passed. Yet, despite this time-consuming and exaggerated effort, few minority police officers have come from these programs.

More important, however, is that the validity of the original assumption which underlies this recruitment is questionable; i.e., that those who can pass the exam can also relate effectively to the lower socio-economic community with its hard-core unemployed who have had repeated failures in school, jobs and with authoritarian agencies. The very ability to pass a standard exam tends to separate them from the hard to reach. In fact, those, black or white, who have just "made it" tend to be harder on those who haven't than other officers. This is not to suggest that minority officers are not desirable; they are, however, limited in their impact on the hard-to-reach elements.

Many cities, trying to help their recruitment problem as well as their image in the community, are conducting a "Cadet Program" in which young men from 17 to 20 are hired on a regular basis and trained to do routine police work which does not require making arrests and carrying weapons. Most such programs require high school diplomas, a clear police record, and in general, closely approximate the requirements for the regular police force. Vacancies are filled through city-wide examinations, and a common feature of these programs is that the cadet is required to work toward a college degree during the cadet training period. An accommodation is made in the scheduling of his work for his academic needs.

The principal advantage of these programs is that it allows the police department to utilize the manpower of young men below the age requirement for rather routine police duty. While there is no question that such a program is attractive to some young men from minority groups, the requirements of education and lack of police records act to shut out a large proportion of disadvantaged youth. These standards may result in the exclusion of those very young men whose

employment would be most valuable to the community in terms of redirected lives - their own as well as those they might influence. Their inside expertise, particularly with juvenile activities in inner city areas, would be most valuable to the police department.

These cadet programs can be criticized on several other grounds:

1. Because of general police department manpower shortages, the cadets tend to be used for clerical and other routine work.

2. The cadets are assigned within the existing police department structure which, as it stands, is limited in its ability to reach inner city residents. This failure exists despite the fact that the recruiting structure of the program is particularly designed to affect this problem.

3. No specific mechanism is developed within the cadet program to utilize the special skills of the inner city recruits; i.e., their community background and know-how, or the conspicuous fact of youth.

4. Young "police officers in training" face the same barriers which need to be surmounted as regular officers; i.e., lack of acceptance by the community on the one hand, and inability to identify and communicate with those who need to be reached, on the other hand.

In recruiting, both for the police cadet program and the regular police force, the negative image of the police department could be offset by the positive incentives of pay, position, and security. This positive situation, however, is not reflected as the New York Police Department, in general, is failing in its effort to recruit Negroes and other minorities. In a New York Times article of August 8, 1967, Deputy Chief Inspector Eldridge Waith talks about why Negro men do not select police work as a career. He states that "We have a bad image," and "by being a police officer, we are finks." "This means the choice of a police career for many Negroes is a choice between their community or the Police Department." As the drive for identification within the black community grows (as it is likely to do), the choice will increasingly be made on the side of the community <u>unless</u> something is done to change the image of the police.

The fact remains that police departments are having difficulty finding recruits to meet their personnel needs while the hard-core unemployment of ghetto males remains one of the crucial factors contributing to delinquency and disorder in urban communities. There may be obstacles to the employment of these men but there are also advantages.

They possess a valuable degree of knowledge about the communities in which they live and the life style of the community. The opportunity for meaningful employment, coupled with the motivation to "make it", should provide a powerful alternative to delinquency and subsequent or continued criminal activity.

The dialogue created by such employment could have a direct impact on interaction between the police department and the community.

On the following pages, we will outline the many steps that are necessary to promote a program we believe, after much research and demonstrated effectiveness, will serve most communities and police departments to their best interests.

IV. Establishing a Police – Community Relations Aide Position

Rather than "chang/ing/ the definition of the police function to make it more consistent with society's needs"[1] (emphasis supplied), this proposal, if implemented fully, will extend the boundaries of its traditional functions:

> The New Careers idea ... assumes, for example, that the basic institutions of society are sound and are not in need of radical overhaul. It attempts no radical revision of values within society. It assumes, for example, that the basic purpose and functions of the school or probation department -- as they now exist -- are mostly valid. What it does say, in essence, is that the mesh between these institutions and the realities of life for the poor is faulty. The institutions have middle class orientations and are run by middle class people. For this reason, the rules and perceptions of the institution are likely to be inadequate to the actualities of life as seen and felt by the poor. Conversely the understanding and adaptations of the poor are likely to be inadequate to the demands and character of the institution.[2] (emphasis supplied)

Therefore, a generalized helping relationship is proposed to bridge the gaps between agencies with specialized professionals and the minority public. It is to be located within the police department because gaps in services often underlie crime or public disorder.

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[1]Proceedings: Planning Sessions on Police-Community Relations. Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. Washington, D.C. n.d. p.6

[2]Police-Community Relations Aides in Richmond, California. Survey Research Center, University of California, Berkeley. William R. Smith. December, 1967. p.73

Because of the mutual distrust and tensions existing between the hard-core un- or underemployed and the police department, it is admittedly a difficult task to develop New Careers jobs in the police department. Some programs have developed positions which are largely clerical, administrative and technical, thereby releasing professionals for specialized work. While such restructuring of job functions should be continued (and encouraged for people who have abilities and interests in these areas), because of the "human services" goal of New Careers, we suggest a largely self-contained career in police-community relations be developed to establish direct bridges to the community. This position would primarily be complementary to, rather than directly assisting, the police officer's enforcement function.

The aide will, as a civilian member of the police department, perform services which are not now being performed or not being performed adequately. These services are primarily helping in nature and therefore preventive rather than enforcing. He should have neither the authority nor the responsibility for making arrests or for informing. His effectiveness will depend upon the trust the community has in his ability to keep confidences, within discretion. This condition must exist as police

department policy. The police-community relations role would be distinct from that of the regular policeman (and therefore there should be no competitiveness between the two). Community relations work is one of peacemaking, (at the minimum a negative and momentary function), but hopefully would involve providing suggestions, alternatives, tangible and intangible support in order to prevent the likelihood of further recurrences. Indeed, their function is to provide <u>alternatives</u> to disruption of the public order and to possible arrest -- <u>before</u> the fact.

In all likelihood police-community relations aides will work primarily in the Juvenile Division, Community Relations Division or Crime Prevention Bureau. Their duties will be:

1. <u>Informative</u> (producing and disseminating literature, speaking to groups and possibly going from door to door regarding public safety and crime prevention);

2. <u>"Recreational"</u> and group oriented (organizing athletic groups, senior citizens' groups);

3. <u>Case-work oriented</u> (in-depth work with individuals, juveniles especially, and families who come to the attention of the police);

4. <u>Neighborhood improvement</u> (mediating problems between neighbors, educating people in how to

use services that are available in employment, sanitation, welfare, and "crusading" for improved services).

Using this very general description of the functions of a police-community relations position, the New Careers job developer should approach those within the police department who might logically be concerned with efficiency, personnel and/or community relations. If the Police Chief is exceptionally aware of these problems, one can start at the top. It may, however, be necessary to start with a concerned and receptive person at a lower level. Communications should be broadly based and the Mayor and/or his office should be contacted at the same time because their cooperation politically, administratively and in a public relations sense will be invaluable. The job developer will also, if there is serious consideration at the top, need to get in touch with the police professional association to gain their broad support. It is important that no one be overlooked; often those who are may try to block or effectively ignore a program because it was developed without their active participation.

The job developer must have done his homework before

seeing anyone (e.g., terminology, civil service regulations, specific incidents indicating adverse police-community relations, how many unfilled positions are budgeted in the department).*

An objection that will probably be raised is that of "professionalism". The upgrading of policemen to the status of credentialed professionals through college credits and degrees may seem threatened -- particularly when aides do not meet standard police department qualifications. Further, many middle and lower level policemen (with only high school diplomas) may see the aides as new and strange individuals, who are being trained on the job, perhaps to compete for their own jobs. One should emphasize the difference between their roles, i.e., enforcement -- and that of police-community relations aides -- prevention and peacemaking.

The job developer's main arguments for creating such a position should be presented to the user agency as well as the Mayor's office and civil service:

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* For a good discussion of specific points see the SDC Job Development Manual, III. Researching Potential User Agencies, p. 6.

a) Additional manpower in the police department is needed to provide present services more adequately and also to provide additional services geared toward prevention of crime. This can be provided at lower cost by indigenous nonprofessionals while professionals can be released from tasks which they neither like nor which utilizes their special training.

b) New approaches to improving police-community (especially minority) relations are vitally needed. (Almost any edition of any city newspaper will support this contention.)

c) Career employment of hard-core unemployed or marginally employed can be seen as a reduction of the alienated and rootless. These potentially crime-producing individuals are given a "stake in society" thereby decreasing police business and creating productive members of society (tax-paying, not welfare-receiving).

The points which are of primary interest and concern to particular individuals should be emphasized, e.g., effi-

ciency to a police department budget officer, public relations to a mayor, etc.

The community should be involved at an early stage. If there appears to be a stalemate, or simply a lack of effort, pressure might be exerted through influential political and community leaders, newspaper stories, and even public meetings.* Discretion must be used, however, in using community and newspaper pressure for (a) community hopes may be raised -- only to be dashed and (b) the police department may become entrenched in its opposition.

Once there has been general agreement by the police department and Mayor's office to go ahead, the community (i.e., the "agency's clients") should be made aware of the program. Their help might be sought in providing a list of "grievances" and/or needs peculiar to that community which the police department might properly supply.

The job description should utilize the community's stated needs. A task force consisting of policemen and

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* See SDC Job Development Manual, V. Strategies of Approach to An Agency Head, p. 13.

interested citizens could define the duties an aide might perform. Technical services from the police department personnel officer and a civil service specialist will be essential in task analysis; i.e., determining what needs to be done, what qualifications are necessary to perform each task , and the training necessary to obtain those skills.

Specific duties that most cities will find essential to incorporate into an aide's job description (because the tasks need doing and can best utilize the aide's unique contributions) are: (see Chart I)

(1) Education on drug abuse before school groups (alone or with a uniformed officer), parents groups and community groups. Those aides who speak from experience are the most effective, just as ex-alcoholics are the most effective in rehabilitating and preventing alcoholism. The aide should be available for individuals to speak to him alone, and a reputation for retaining confidences is imperative.

(2) Organizing and supervising groups of idle youths

for athletics, camping trips, dances. Other groups, e.g., parents, senior citizens, might be formed as the need arises.

(3) Answering police calls of a non-serious nature, e.g., breach of peace, disputes that might be resolved by talking to those involved (between married couples, neighbors, merchants and youths) and following up on these cases when possible to ensure that there will not be a repetition.

(4) Answering calls made to the police department which should properly be referred to other city departments, e.g., housing complaints. In some cases, making sure that the citizen gets to the proper department, and following up to make certain that proper action is taken.

(5) Creating a clearer understanding of "public order" and an atmosphere which encourages a partnership between the police and community.

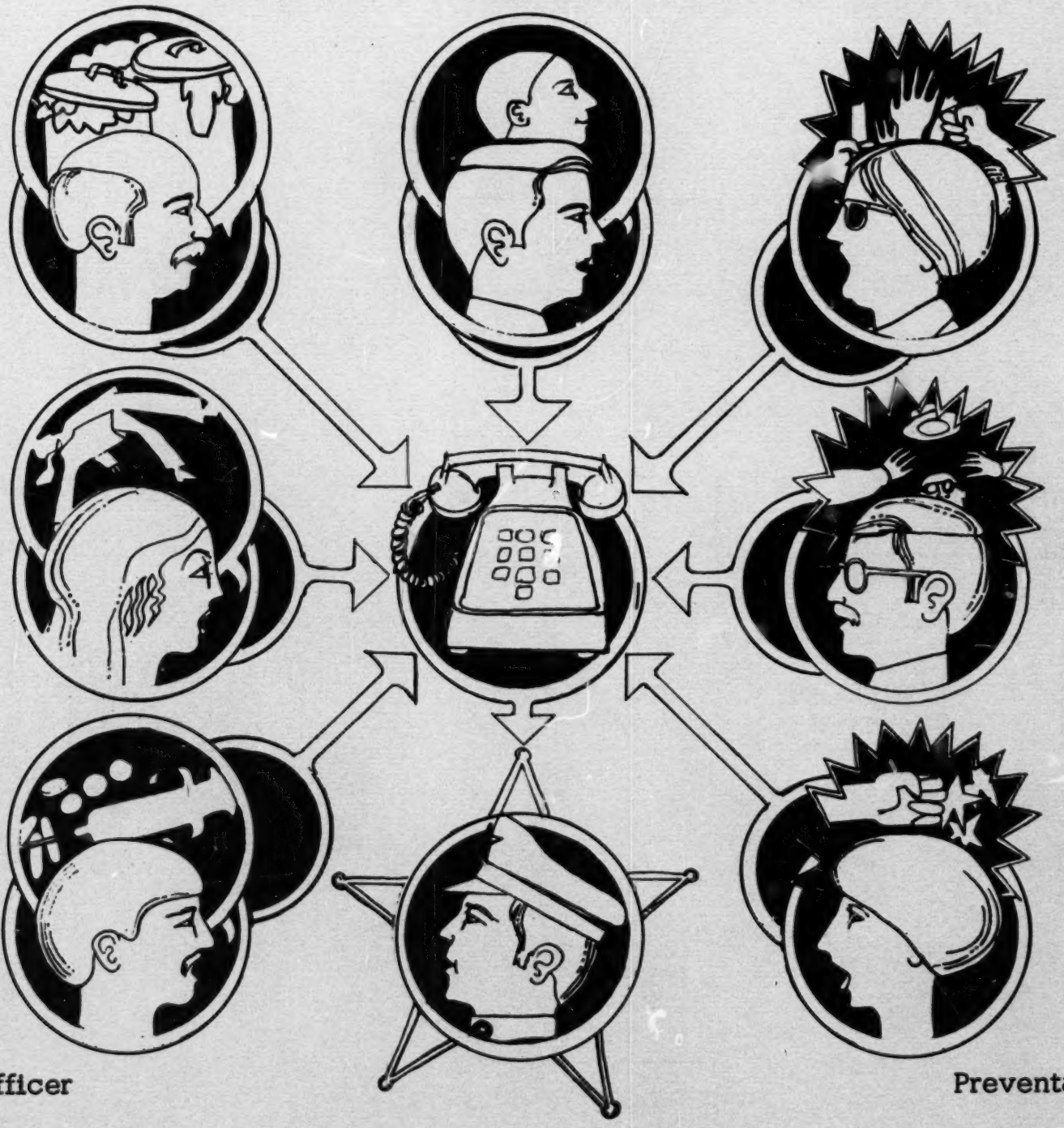
a) Formal (e.g., seminars) as well as informal contact with police officers on a regular basis to bridge the gap in communications.

Willie needs watching over and involvement in constructive activities--your police athletic program perhaps. He's not a bad boy.....

Garbage, garbage all over the sidewalk. It hasn't been picked up in days. Something has to be done....

Could someone speak to our woman's group on self-defense and maybe teach us defensive karate?

Parents are concerned about drug abuse in our school. Could someone speak to our PTA about how to counteract it?



Rumors are floating around about police brutality. There is a mob out here uptight and talking about "taking action."

These kids come in every day after school and create a commotion. They're frightening away all my customers. I can't control them.....

Help me. My husband's acting crazy. He's threatening to beat me.

Directly assisting officer

Preventative and/or new service

POLICE OFFICER RECEIVING TELEPHONE CALLS

CHART 1: SPECTRUM OF DUTIES PERFORMED BY POLICE-COMMUNITY RELATIONS AIDE

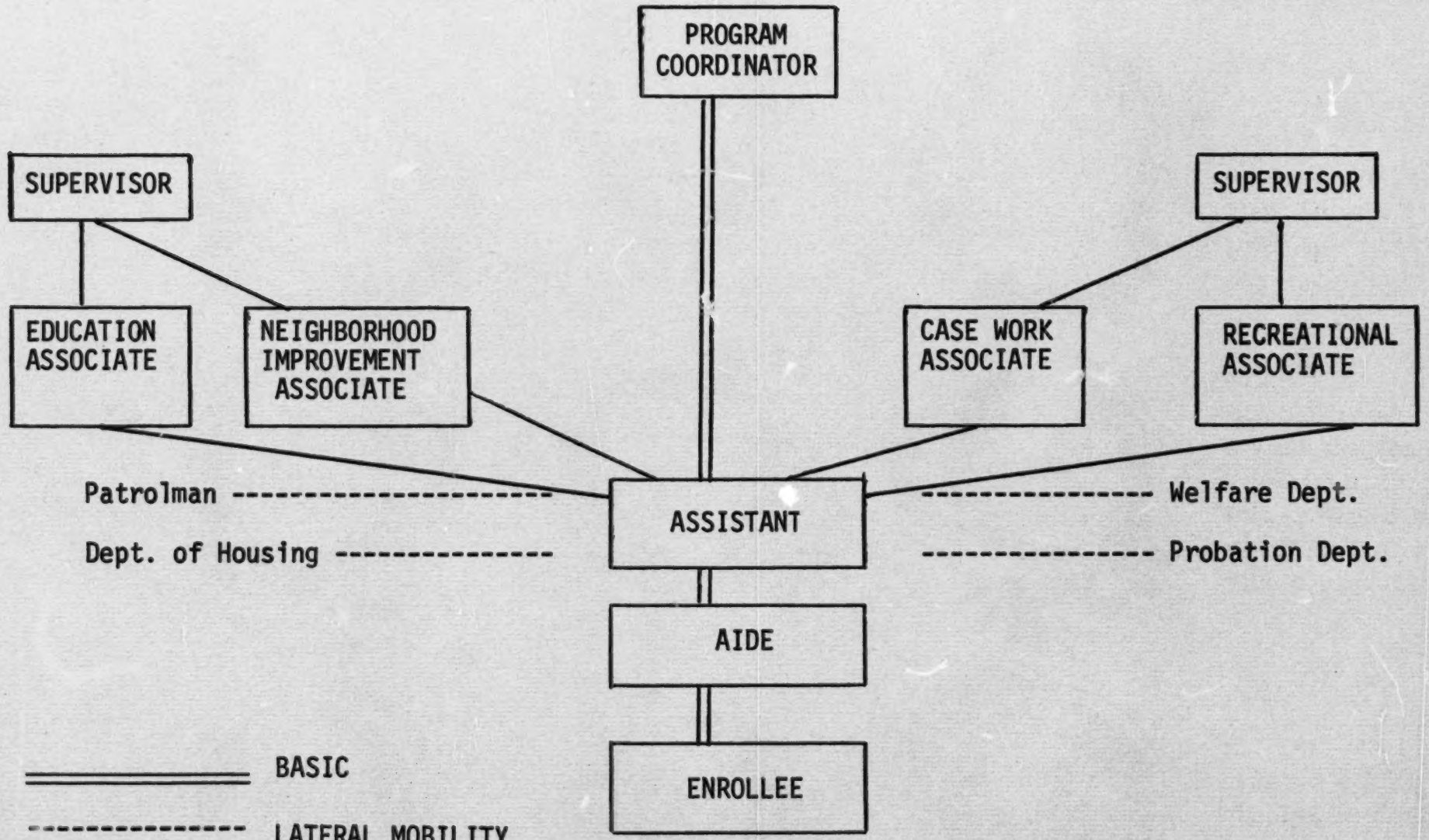


CHART II. Police-Community Relations New Careers Ladder

b) Increasing community knowledge of the police department's functions and obtaining its cooperation in crime prevention. (Often members of a community are so hostile to the police that they overlook crime which does not affect them directly.)

(6) Control of rumors by disseminating accurate information, especially in tense situations, as well as arranging to handle legitimate protests in a peaceful manner.

To qualify for New Careers funding, of course, there must be at least a three-step career progression indicating correspondingly greater responsibilities at each level (with training to meet each step's qualifications available) and of course, commensurate salary increase. (see Chart II)

At the first level, the aide is primarily being trained on the job with close supervision. At the second level, the police-community relations assistant (representative, or specialist) is under general direction, but with minimal supervision. The length of time in each step should be fixed, although not rigidly, at the oustset. For instance,

the first three months as an enrollee would be devoted to pre-service training (intensive remediation, generic issues, orientation to work and to the police department). At the first level, the aide will be trained on the job with close supervision but with gradually increasing responsibilities, and continuing in-service education. By the end of the first year, he should be up to the level of high school equivalency (although this should not be a condition for continuing in the program) and be on the second level, working with minimal supervision. He is largely on his own to use his unique qualities and his initiative in developing contacts, programs, and relationships. Flexibility should be built into the job description with, to a large extent, the job molded to the individual rather than fitting the aide into rigidly structured, predetermined duties. When specialization occurs, a third, associate level can be added and a fourth if each specialization becomes large enough for a supervisor-coordinator. The highest level generally involves supervision and responsibility for the overall program development.

The Aide position requires the hard-to-define and almost impossible-to-assess qualities of: leadership,

initiative, self-reliance, motivation, and interest, as well as trust by peers. In general, one should look for a sense of community awareness, desire to help others and a (relatively) objective outlook of the police, or at least willingness to be convinced. It would be presumptuous for middle class employment service counselors or police officers to try to select leaders on the basis of an interview or two, although an interview could be useful if it is kept in perspective. Questions which might be asked in interviewing are: What can you offer the community? What can you offer the police department? How will you overcome the police informer tag? What is wrong with the police-community relationship? Small group interaction might better indicate leadership qualities -- but since the emphasis is on screening in, the absence of such qualities should not automatically screen out. After some time in training, if certain individuals appear completely ineffective in their relationships with their peers, similar positions in the police department or other New Careers agencies should be available as alternatives.

If the question, "Whom do we need to reach in the community?" is kept in mind, creaming can be prevented.

CEP or New Careers centers will refer applicants; other direct approaches may be used at the same time re-informing the community of the program. If ex-offenders are to be considered, probation officers should be so informed.

At least six months should be allowed for staffing and advance planning. A police officer, perhaps the community relations officer or training officer, should coordinate the program. If another agency is actively involved in planning (i.e., the Mayor's office or a training agency), joint coordinators might be chosen, dividing primary responsibilities along lines of who is best able to implement which portion of the program. While often a nuisance on a daily basis, in the long run joint control symbolizes a partnership. The advantages of tangible and intangible support throughout the city administration and community would likely offset the disadvantages of coordinating across agency lines. The relative balance of positive factors vs. inherent, although not inevitable, difficulties of dual responsibility, is dependent upon local conditions and must be decided individually.

If possible, someone who has been involved in a successful police-community relations aide program should be brought in during the planning stages for several days to work with all levels of planning as well as providing positive motivational direction.

There should be one counselor/job coach for every ten enrollees. He would have the broadest responsibility for keeping the enrollee in and helping him adjust to the program. He must have knowledge of the city and its services, the community he will be working in and the problems of the hard-core unemployed. If possible, he should be of the same ethnic group as his enrollees, and perhaps be a New Careerist himself.

Instruction may take several forms. Colleges could be involved, either in "sheltered" or "unsheltered" courses. While this may be important for later in-service training, most enrollees at first will feel comfortable, and thus benefit more, from less formal instruction. Therefore, teachers may be sought on a free-lance basis, with or without the usual "credentials" since the standard is effectiveness in teaching remediation and generic issues. Instructors should work closely with police supervisors so that learning

in the classroom and practice on the job reinforce each other. The theory is made specific and the practical is generalized.

It is essential that the police department arrange released time for officers to teach law enforcement and legal procedures which only they can teach adequately. They will also at the same time become familiar with the enrollee, his abilities and problems.

Training must be adjusted to the enrollees' level of achievement in each subject. This will make the instructor's job more difficult but hopefully, he will be chosen because he finds this challenging. It will also be necessary, as a first step, to help change the enrollees' attitudes toward learning and books and therefore a variety of methods and materials should be experimented with. The teacher will have to provide individual attention and a maximum class number should be set at ten enrollees.

Instruction will be divided into several parts:

(1) Remediation leading to effective job functioning (and hopefully to a high school equivalency

diploma since this seems essential in almost any job or career). It has been suggested that an average of approximately twelve hours a week for the first six months be scheduled for remedial training. Possibly, a more concentrated schedule should be established at first, decreasing it gradually as more relevant on-the-job training increases. The right "mix" of classroom and on-the-job training will vary from group to group and individual to individual and flexibility should be built in. Provisions for fast learners must be made, (e.g., perhaps college level courses, or more concentrated on-the-job training). Since the pace of learning will vary widely, a flexible instructor is necessary.

(2) Generic issues involve training which is common to all human services fields and is best conducted in a small (10) core group. It will cover orientation to;

a) the world of work, specifically being a New Careerist in the police department,

b) the city and its services, the police department and its problems and functions in society, legal and judicial processes, the relation of his community and his experiences to the larger community. Questions should come from, i.e., be pertinent to, the enrollee, and answers should be sought out by him.

c) himself, his neighbors, individually and as a group, psychologically and sociologically. Role playing (i.e., acting out of real problems encountered) is often the most effective learning technique in problems relating to human behavior.

d) working with individuals and groups, communicating with others.

(3) On-the-job training should be guided by a police officer who has had some training and interest in urban problems and understands the necessity for bringing the police and the ghetto communities together in a more compatible relationship.

Adequate released time is necessary for line super-

visors so they may provide supervision and guidance once on-the-job training begins. Adding this supervisory responsibility to a full-time job schedule is grossly misunderstanding a vital importance of New Careerist supervision and guidance. The aide should report to one man, chosen, hopefully, for his understanding of the program and empathy with minority groups problems. The line supervisors should have an orientation session to the New Careers concept as well as an exposure to urban problems. On-going seminars should be held. Training sessions for those officers who will work with, but not supervise aides, should also be held. The circle of involvement should widen perceptibly as time goes on, to broaden both the aide's experience and that of members of the department.

It is important for the representative of the agency to be able to show that he is not speaking about an experimental program, but one that has been strongly tested. The following experience is the basis for selling the program.

V. A Successful Program: The Los Angeles Police Department

Los Angeles has instituted, with New Careers funding, a civilian career ladder within the police department in which an enrollee with minimal (fifth grade reading level) qualifications can, through in-service training, rise to community services assistant and then to community relations representative and then to a supervisory position of coordinator. The city has recently provided lateral mobility by opening the doors of other departments to those who, even with felony records, complete satisfactorily a year's training.

Twenty enrollees were recruited from two low-income target areas, one predominantly Mexican-American, the other Negro. Since among applicants from East Los Angeles, 60% had felony arrests and 40% a known history of involvement with narcotics, the universal practice of refusing to hire ex-offenders had to be re-evaluated. The mayor's philosophy, as put in writing to the Board of Civil Service Commissioners, was, "It is my desire for the City to give these individuals the chance to prove themselves and thus gain the self-respect and dignity that is needed to break out of the cycle of poverty. We must not continually punish those who have under our system of justice already paid their debt to society by excluding them

from meaningful employment. Millions of dollars are spent on training and rehabilitation programs within our State. We must present an avenue to validate that expenditure and express our desire not to judge a man solely by his past, but also to consider the present."

And future, we might add. (An evaluation a year later stated that, generally, the ex-offenders with the longest records did the best job. "We have demonstrated that their anti-social behavior can be overcome and their agressive force can be rechanneled into job initiative and motivation ... their past has not affected their ability to perform the functions required by the position. In fact, the enrollees' backgrounds have proven to be a necessary element in the successful performance of this position".)

With initial and continuing strong support from the Mayor's office and from the top levels of the police department, a strong foundation was laid.

Enrollees went through a ten-week intensive training course designed to introduce them to the field of law enforcement, its procedures and functions, to provide remedial education (sufficient to obtain a G.E.D. hopefully,

but not as a requirement to continue in the program), and to develop leadership skills and an understanding of themselves and their communities. "Only one mistake was made regarding curriculum. We underestimated the calibre of our enrollees ... they were very much more mature, possessing great common sense and had above-average communication skills."

The training sessions were not held at the police stations but at apartments in housing projects which were donated by the city. There were two advantages to this: the enrollees' wariness and apprehensions about working in a police department were overcome gradually, and the community became aware of and involved in the program at an early stage.

Assignment at local divisions followed and aides began to serve the unique function of being a two-way bridge between the police and their home community. One important aspect of their job is speaking to small groups and school assemblies: "The students remember these aides and their presentations but forget those of the officers involved ... because the New Careers personnel are able to

communicate (their) experiences ... and failures", relates one commanding officer. While it is important to work in conjunction with a police officer, it is also essential that the aide be available by himself for youths and parents to seek him out in complete confidence without fear of reprisal or possible police action.

Aides formed and worked with groups -- senior citizens councils as well as athletic and recreation clubs for youths. They may be assigned to work closely with a particular youth who has come to the attention of the police and his family in order to prevent serious crime problems (sometimes in conjunction with probation officers and/or probation aides to prevent recidivism).

They respond to minor complaints such as boisterous teenagers, domestic disputes, and often mediate the situation without calling upon police officers. They can and have de-escalated community-police controversies which potentially might have erupted into a civil disorder.

One commanding officer states, "In every instance known in this division, the community New Careers workers

have developed a pro-police attitude brought on by their association in and around the police station and community."

The success of the program can be measured by how well it has reached the community. One report by a citizens review committee comments: "The services provided by the aides give many families the feeling that the city really does care about them and wants to help them."

Several problems seriously impaired the potential effectiveness of the program, but can be remedied in the future. Enrollees' personal problems often interfere with their work and consequently assistance, tangible and intangible, should be available for problems ranging from initial lack of money for subsistence, family problems, civil problems regarding auto insurance and credit buying, arrests for felony, misdemeanor and warrant charges, and parole, probation and court appearance.

Inadequate appropriation of manpower, civilian and police, hindered the program. Although the police department made every attempt to keep the aide in the program, often waiving regular department disciplinary procedures, nine enrollees left the program. Perhaps with more thor-

ough support, many of them might have remained.

Police officers were given the added responsibility of guiding, training, and supervising aides, rather than hiring an additional person, or at least lessening their other responsibilities commensurately. Despite, or perhaps because of the fact that there was inadequate supervision, "the majority of the aides' activities has been developed by their own initiative, imagination, and self-determination ... The credit for the successful field implementation of the program must be given to the resourceful and dedicated aides." While some control and guidance must be available when needed, a certain flexibility and looseness is necessary if resourcefulness and initiative and their unique knowledge of their community are not to be stifled.

An inadequate presentation and orientation to the community and to patrolmen resulted in some confusion and/or hostility at the outset of the program. This can be resolved by early involvement of both line officers and the community at the beginning stages.

Despite problems, the program in Los Angeles is the most innovative single step in the attempt to improve communications as well as affect the unemployment/manpower shortage dilemma.

Programs of social services situated in poor communities and utilizing skills of non-professionals can be the means of achieving a new role for the police in relation to crime prevention. They may also create a significant source of employment for young men from ghetto areas and offer the promise of a vital new relationship between the police and the poor.

The employment of non-professionals in a career line in the police department can, as it has in Los Angeles, contribute toward the following objectives:

1. Provide new sources of personnel for the department, thus reducing shortages.

2. Improve police-community relations.

3. Expand and improve the preventive and protective functions of the department.

4. Provide needed meaningful employment for unemployed and underemployed poverty area residents.

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